

THE DOUBLE CLEANSING NO. 2431

**A SERMON
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORD'S DAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 1895.
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON,
ON LORD'S-DAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 18, 1887.**

"In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness. And it shall come to pass in that day, says the LORD of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land."
Zechariah 13:1, 2.

WHEN you read a letter, it is well to notice the date upon it—you may make mistakes if you do not. The promise in our text is dated, “In that day.” If we look a little way back, we shall find, in the 10th verse of the 12th chapter, these words, “I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him.” When the soul learns to mourn before the cross, then it shall perceive that there is cleansing from sin. If you have looked to Christ whom you have pierced and, if so looking you have come to lament and loathe your sin, it is in *that day* that God reveals to you the fountain opened for your sin, and for your uncleanness! Are any of you, here, broken down under a sense of sin? Then I am glad that I have such good news for you as my text contains. It is for sinners that Jesus bled and died! It is for you who are conscious of your great guiltiness that the fullness and the freeness of His grace are manifested. If you are a sinner and Jesus is a Savior, you are well met. If, by faith, you will look to Him, it is a proof that He is looking to you, and He will take away your sin and you shall go your way taking with you a song of love and praise unto Him who has so graciously saved you! So, you see that where there is *mourning* for sin, there is *pardon* for sin! When the eyes are full of tears of repentance, they are most fit for looking to Christ who takes all our guilt away. God help every mourner, here, to rejoice in Christ Jesus and His great salvation!

According to my text, this cleansing from guilt and sin is followed by a reformation. There is a fountain opened, first, for the putting away of sin and uncleanness as to the past and present, and there follows upon this that God takes away the idols out of the land and even cuts off the very names and memory of them. God’s flowers generally bloom double—and when He gives us the flower of pardon, He gives us the flower of regeneration with it! He that is made clean is also made new! He that takes away the *guilt* of sin also takes away the *tendency* to sin. God will not forgive you and still leave you to be what you were before, but, forgiving you, He will make a great change in you, so that you shall no more love the ways and the wages of iniquity, but you shall become, henceforth, a lover of *holiness*—one who desires to follow the Lamb wherever He goes and to walk in His ways at all times.

I think there are some who will hear this message who will jump at such good tidings! They are saying in their hearts, “That is just what we want. We do not merely wish to be forgiven our old faults—we long to be made altogether holy. We desire to be set on the road to heaven and to become pure in heart and holy in life.” Well, this is just what God is prepared to do for you! And they who look to Christ shall see in the blood and water streaming from His riven side, the double cleansing that they crave—the blood to atone for guilt and the water to wash away the tendency towards future sin! These two things, of which I have spoken to you these many *years*, are what I have to speak about, again, at this time. But I do not want to merely speak about them and let it all end in talk. What is a mouthful of words worth? They will never feed the hunger of the soul. I want you to come to a *personal* dealing with God and to lay hold upon Christ and eternal life! I pray that you may find these two great things of which I have to

speak—first, the cleansing from uncleanness, and then, afterwards, the cleansing of the life. So will you receive a gracious answer to the prayer with which we began our service—

*“Plenteous grace with You is found,
Grace to cover all my sin.
Let the healing streams abound,
Make and keep me pure within.
You of life the fountain are,
Freely let me take of Thee
Spring You up within my heart,
Rise to all eternity!”*

I. To begin with the first cleansing—I will keep to the words of the text, for there are no words like the words of God—and the words of the text are the best part of the sermon. This, then, is the first head of my discourse, A CLEANSING FOUNTAIN OPENED. “In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.

In the first place, *uncleanness is, in itself, a loathsome, foul thing*. It used to be thought, in the Church of Rome, I believe, that if a person never washed himself, he might acquire the odor of sanctity and become a great saint. We believe no such thing! We fancy that cleanliness is the next thing to godliness and, somehow, we loathe to be put into association with people who abhor cold water and never wash themselves. Personal uncleanness is a disgusting thing and those who work very much among the depraved find it one of the hardest parts of their work, to have to put up with filthiness and uncleanness. Well now, that uncleanness of body is a picture of what uncleanness of soul is—a sinner is disgusting to God. Notwithstanding all the love that He has towards men and His desire to bless them, yet sin is a thing which the soul of God abhors! All unrighteousness is most obnoxious to Him. The doing of wrong is a thing which God cannot endure. He reckons it to be a filthy, loathsome, horrible thing. He says to the ungodly, “Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate.” He cannot endure sin—it is contrary to His holy nature—it revolts Him. This is how the Lord sets forth sin to us—it is uncleanness in His sight.

Dear friends, I would not wonder if we feel that as sin is a filthy thing to the eyes of God, and He loathes it, *we look upon ourselves as filthy beings and we loathe ourselves*. It is a good sign of the working of divine grace in the heart when a man begins to feel himself filthy—when he says, “I cannot rest till I am washed. I cannot endure this uncleanness any longer. Time was when I was willing, even, to wallow in sin, but something has happened to me that has awakened up my conscience and touched my heart—and I cannot bear to remain as I am. Lord, wash me! Wash me! Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.” You are in a good way, my dear friend, when you begin to feel obnoxious to yourself, even as your sin has made you to be obnoxious to God! Self-loathing is one of the early stages of helpful spiritual life. I remember when I would have given all the world if I had possessed it, to escape from myself—when, as I remembered my sin, I wished I could have ceased to be that I might have escaped from all my past iniquities and from the sin that I felt sure would, in the future, come out of me while the fountain within was so foul and polluted! I pray God that everyone I am now addressing who has never been washed in the open fountain may be made to be loathsome to himself, even as his sin makes him loathsome to God!

You remember, beloved friends that in the tabernacle of old, between the tent of the congregation and the altar, was a laver where the priests might wash themselves before they offered sacrifice to God. In Solomon’s temple there was a molten sea, with ten layers of brass, because God would not have anybody present himself unclean in His house of prayer. So, our text first represents us as *being by nature* unclean, and therefore, *we need washing*. We cannot go into God’s Holy Place and have fellowship with Him as we are. Do you think that God can speak with you as you are? Can He have commerce with sin? Can He wink at iniquity? Can He tolerate that which His justice must condemn? Ah, no! As the unclean man, under the Jewish law, was cut off from all fellowship with the worshippers of God, so is every sinner at a distance from God until he has been washed! I wish you would look at yourself, my dear hearer. Unless you are washed in the blood of the Lamb, you must be regarded as out of fellowship with God, shut out from His presence, under His ban, unable to draw near to God while your filthiness is upon you! This makes uncleanness a very dreadful thing—it is loathsome to God and loathsome to ourselves—and makes us unable to have fellowship with the thrice-holy Jehovah!

At the same time, under the law of God, *an unclean person defiled all that he did*. Wherever he went, he polluted everything. If he sat on a chair, it became defiled. If he drank out of certain vessels, they had to be broken. If he touched other people, he spread the defilement wherever he went while he was, himself, in a state of *ceremonial uncleanness*. Such was the rigor of the law and until you are washed in the blood of Christ—it matters not who or what you are—you defile everything! If you pray, it is but the prayer of the unholy. If you sing, there is no music in the melody to the ear of God. Your need of a new heart has defiled it. All that you do, as it springs from your heart and conscience, which are impure, is defiled. Can a polluted spring send out clear streams? How can your life be right till your heart is right? And how can your heart be right till God, Himself, has renewed it by the power of His eternal Spirit and the merit of the blood of Christ? So you see what an awful thing it was to be unclean. The unclean Jew could not worship. He could not do anything in the midst of his brethren—he was cut off from the tabernacle of the Lord until such time as he was purified.

We have had enough of that terrible truth if you truly feel it and personally realize it, for now our text sweetly leads us to proclaim that *God has provided a way of cleansing us from sin*: “In that day there shall be a fountain opened.” God has provided a means of putting away human sin! The newest gospel, which is no gospel at all, denies this! It will not have it that the evil of the past life can be obliterated and the guilt of sin can be removed by the blood of Jesus. But, in the face of this lie, we declare, in the name of the everlasting God, that there *is* free and full forgiveness for every kind and sort of sin through Jesus Christ our Lord! There is a fountain open and, though your life may have been as black as a life can be, we are bound to tell you, in the name of Jesus Christ, that He has come into the world to save sinners, even the very chief of them! And if you believe in Him there shall be no condemnation unto you! All the guilt of your past life shall be as though it had never been—it shall be cast into the depth of the sea where it shall never be brought up again! It shall be blotted out from the very book of divine remembrance. This is the gospel we are sent to preach to you—

*“Pardon for crimes of deepest dye,
A pardon bought with Jesus’ blood,”*

and this pardon for everyone who, with a sincere heart, looks to Christ upon the cross and trusts in Him.

Note that it is God, Himself, who has provided this fountain. It was God, Himself, who came from heaven to earth to *be* this fountain! It was the Son of God, Himself, who had His own heart set abroad to be the fountain out of which should flow the cleansing stream! I delight to dwell upon this theme! Were I but capable of speaking of it as it ought to be spoken of, I would be glad to proclaim day and night this blessed news—not to you sham sinners who have no sin, so you dream—but to you real sinners, you out-of-the-way sinners, you who have gone farthest of all astray from God! It is to *you* we tell this gladsome piece of news, “In that day there shall be a fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness.”

Next, this source of cleansing is described as *a fountain because of its abiding efficacy*. In the tabernacle and the temple, there stood, as I have already told you, those great bronze lavers. They were enormous cisterns holding vast quantities of water, but they were only cisterns, so that, when many had washed their feet and their hands in them, there was great need that even the lavers should be cleansed and that fresh water should be continually poured into them. But God has not given us a bronze laver or a molten sea, but a fountain, a fountain always flowing and never, itself, deified! However many sinners come and wash, the fountain washes all uncleanness away! It is not, itself, polluted, and the cleansing stream is always springing up, up, up! I think I see Paul as he washed in this fountain. Oh, what filthiness came off Saul of Tarsus, but after he had washed, the fountain was just as effectual for Timothy and all whom Paul brought to the Savior! And now, 1,800 years later, we stand by the same fountain where Paul was washed, and we still sing—

*“There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel’s veins!
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.
The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day
And there may I, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away!”*

It is not a cistern, nor a well into which waters run, but a fountain from which there is a perpetual welling and bubbling up of fresh cleansing power: "In that day there shall be a fountain."

Notice, too, that this is *an opened fountain*. I know that some people say, "We like to hear about the gospel, but it does not seem as though we could get at it." Why not? It is open! When there stands in the very middle of the street a drinking fountain, why is it put there but that everybody who is thirsty may come and drink? Does anybody say, "I am not fit to drink at that fountain"? How is that? Whoever said anything about *fitness*? That poor boy who has been turning cartwheels in the mud may come and drink if he likes. Her ladyship is going by with her carriage—she may stop and drink if she likes. Who is the more likely of the two to do it, however? It is your grand, noble, gentlefolk, as people call them, who do *not* like to come and drink! Some of you may fancy that you are too good for Christ to cleanse, too good to be saved—but the poor boys that make the cartwheels do not think themselves too good to drink at the fountain! They are thirsty, so they come and drink. May the Lord grant that many here may just come and receive Christ in that way! He is an opened fountain, free to all who will to come—and if any do not will to come, it is their own fault—and on their own heads must the blame lie if they do not come, for the fountain is opened, and opened on purpose that the vilest of the vile may come and wash, and be clean!

"A fountain opened"—that is, accessible, available. We try to preach about it to make it more open, but I believe that there is some preaching that shuts it up. People cannot understand the minister's philosophy—they cannot make heads or tails of it, they say. But I have desired to use nothing but Saxon speech and to speak to you with great plainness that you may understand the message of the gospel. Jesus Christ took the sin of men upon Himself and suffered in their place, so that whoever believes in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life—and if you believe in Him, you are washed from your iniquity through the blood-shedding of the Lord Jesus Christ! If He paid our debts, they are paid. If He bore the penalty of our sin, it is not to also be borne by us, and we accept Him by faith to stand for us. We are, ourselves, accepted in the beloved, set free from guilt, and saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation! Well did Joseph Hart sing—

*"This fountain, though rich, from charge is quite clear,
The poorer the wretch, the more welcome here!
Come needy, and guilty, come loathsome and bare,
You can't come too filthy, come just as you are!
This fountain in vain has never been tried—
It takes out all stain whenever applied:
The water flows sweetly with virtue divine,
To cleanse souls completely, though leprous as mine."*

I do not know where you happen to be, poor despairing one. Perhaps you are away there at the back of the gallery, but I am sent especially to you who are most despairing, to you who seem to be in the iron cage and cannot get out. Behold, I wrench away the iron bars with this gospel word: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved," for there is a fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness, for the great ones if they will come—for the house of David and for the poor ones if they will come—for the inhabitants of Jerusalem! If they do but come and wash in *this* fountain, they shall be cleansed!

Sing that one verse now in the middle of my sermon—

*"Dear dying Lamb, Your precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed Church of God
Be saved to sin no more."*

II. There follows, upon the opening of this cleansing fountain, A GREAT CHANGE OF CONDUCT. In the second verse of our text we read, "It shall come to pass in that day, says the Lord of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land."

When a man finds pardon, he says to himself, "Now, *away go my sins; away go my sins*. I will not spare one of them." If he has been guilty of drunkenness, *away go the pots!* If he has been a man who has used foul language, I have often noticed that that is a temptation that generally goes, directly. It has often amazed me that men who have for 50 years scarcely spoken without an oath, from the moment they are converted never swear again! That seems to be a sin that dies very quickly—one stroke, and

away it goes! I wish that all other sins went half as easily! But the pardoned man wakes up and finds that he has a great deal to do in clearing out all manner of mischief and rubbish and defilement—but if the Lord has really forgiven him, he says, “Out you go, all of you! None of you are going to stay here. I must have done with you forever. I will not spare one of you guilty things that made my Savior bleed!”—

*“Twas you, my sins, my cruel sins,
His chief tormentors were!
Each of my crimes became a nail,
And unbelief the spear.”*

This clearance of sin should be *very thorough*. There are some who do not begin the new life well—they are half-hearted in giving up sin and they always, sooner or later, give up their profession of Christianity, for there was never any reality in it. But where it is the real work of God’s grace, there the man says, “No, no! I do not want any sin to live and, by God’s grace, it shall not.” Perhaps he cannot, for the moment, overcome all sin. Old habits are still strong upon him, but he says, “I will never rest until they are all overthrown, for I will not continue under the power and sway of any one of these, my old idols. Down they shall come. Dagon and all the hellish crew shall be broken in pieces.” So did we sing just now—

*“Oh, how I hate those lusts of mine
That crucified my God!
Those sins that pierced and nailed His flesh
Fast to the fatal wood!
While with a melting, broken heart,
My murdered Lord I view,
I’ll raise revenge against my sins,
And slay the murderers, too.”*

And that is not all, for the Lord says not only that the idols shall go, but he declares, “I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land.” *Their very names were to be forgotten.* The Jews did not like to pronounce the names of any of the idol gods—they thought that it polluted their mouths to do so. They often gave to them names in mockery, on purpose, to avoid using the real names. And the child of God says, “I do not want to even *mention* sin.” There is great wisdom in what Paul says concerning all uncleanness, “Let it not be once named among you, as becomes saints, for it is a shame to even speak of those things which are done of them in secret.” It is defiling to the mind of the Christian to even *speak* about some of his old ways. “Oh,” says one, “you are a very rigid Puritan!” I am and in this age we need a great deal more than we have of rigid Puritanism! We are to hate even the garment spotted by the flesh! Years ago, when they dug into a disused pit in a village, they took up some old rags and, as a consequence, nearly all the people in that village died of the plague. They did not know what was in the old rags buried in the pit. We are afraid of the old rags of *sin*—we do not like digging them up! I believe that some of you, who used to drink, had better go seven miles round rather than pass some public house doors where you formerly went. Some of you cannot do without awful peril what other people might very freely do because there is a special temptation for you about that particular form of evil. You must not even mention the names of the sins, for there grows up in a man who has been long used to sin, a passion for it—a passion against which he cannot readily guard himself. Stay away, stay away! Remember the old Jewish proverb about the Nazarite who had been pledged from his youth to drink no wine. The proverb says, “O Nazarite, go about, go about and walk not through the vineyard!” Keep as far as you can away from temptation!

So, you see, when the Lord works this great change in us, He makes us to feel that we do not like to even *mention* the names of our old idols—we would put them away out of our mouths altogether.

Yes, and God goes further than that, for He says that He will put away the very remembrance of them: *“they shall no more be remembered.”* Augustine, before his conversion, had been in the habit of associating with a woman of vicious life. After his conversion, she passed him in the street and said to him, “Augustine, it is I,” and he, as he could not go by without giving her some answer, replied, “Yes, but it is not I!” That is to say, “Augustine is now another Augustine. He can have no more to do with you, for he is a changed man, he forgets his old pursuits.” This is what the Lord would have us do. If there is anything which has pleased you, but has grieved Him—if there is anything that has defiled you,

then if you have been washed with the blood of your dear Savior's heart—forget that sin! Be today as though you had never known it. Forget its sweetness and only remember the bitterness it brought to Him! Forget its charms as you would forget the azure scales of the serpent and remember only its sting, when it has stung you so—yes, and stung your Savior to the death! God help us in this, dear friends, not to even remember the names of our old sins, or the sins themselves with any sort of love.

Notice, also, that the Lord went still further than that, for He said. "*I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.*" The prophets were to pass out of the land. "We have no prophets now," says one. But you know what these prophets did—they led the people to worship false gods. So, when God forgave His people, they sent these prophets packing. Have you any prophets of this sort? I will point out one. He will be outside the tabernacle, tonight, to meet you. He will come to you and say, "Now, old friend, come with me, and go to such-and-such a place." On the road he will speak to you in such a way as will drive out of you every impression you have received. It often happens that it is absolutely necessary to say—

*"My old companions, fare you well!
I cannot go with you to hell."*

There are connections that must be broken and the sooner you do it, and the more fully you do it, the better for you if there are false prophets who have led you astray—companions who have jested with you, or associates who have led you into vice—and the devil has many of these prophets who seem to be more industrious to damn men than we are to save them! They compass sea and land to make proselytes for infidelity and vice! You know the men and the women, too, and the diligence with which they pursue their evil calling. Come away from them! Come away from them—there are better companions to be found than these. I like to see the workman in the workshop, when he finds that he has to toil with ungodly men, keep himself to himself, or get with some others who are of his own way of thinking and acting—and not mixing with those who are engaged in evil pursuits.

Perhaps there are some young persons here, tonight, who have just left that pretty country village and the old Baptist meeting house where they have always gone since they were converted, and they are in London for the first time. Now, mind these false prophets that are about! You will find them everywhere—perhaps lads of your own age, or possibly old men, steeped up to their lips in filthiness—they will count it their pleasure to degrade and pollute you! Get away from them! Have nothing to do with them! Fly for your life, even if, like Joseph, you have to leave your cloak behind you! Away, away, away, if God has forgiven you. If not, get forgiveness *now*. Before you go out of this building, seek Jesus, that you may be washed in His precious blood, and then say to yourself, "Now I am the Lord's. The blood that has cleansed me has bought me. I am Christ's man and for Him I will live. I cannot, I will not, have idols! Neither will I hear nor even talk about them, or seem to have any connection with them. I am, if not in the common meaning of the term, yet spiritually, I am a Nonconformist. I will not be conformed to the world, but be separated from it, that I may be conformed to Christ and follow Him in holy ways in the midst of this evil generation."

Look first to my Lord upon the cross, and when you have looked until your sin is gone, then lift up your hands to Him and solemnly say, "My Lord Jesus, as You have died for me, I will live for You as You shall help me." Amen, so let it be, for Christ's sake!

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: PSALM 51; ZECHARIAH 12:10-14; 13:1-6.

We will first read Psalm 51. If we need any music to this Psalm, we must have the liquid melody of tears, sighs, cries, entreaties. It is above all the others, the *penitential Psalm*. It is the Psalm of David when Nathan the prophet came to him after he had committed his great sin with Bathsheba. Thus, David prayed—

Psalm 51—Verses 1-3. *Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of Your tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.*

And there is no hope of pardon unless we do this! We must not try to cloak or hide our sin from God, but we must acknowledge our transgressions. Our sin must be always before us—a ghost that haunts us—a black cloud that hangs over us, which we greatly dread.

4. Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight: that You might be justified when You speak, and be clear when You judge.

Whatever God may say to us, however sharp it is, and whatever God may do to us, however terrible it is, we deserve it! And when we are in a penitential frame of mind, we feel that it is so.

5-7. Behold, I was shaped in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part You shall make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

David does not hope to wash himself! He does not trust in outward ceremonies—he appeals to God, the God against whom he has sinned: “Lord, cleanse me. You alone can do it.”

8. Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which You have broken may rejoice.

When God’s Spirit deals with sinners, He does not play with them. A sense of sin is like the breaking of bones, but God, who breaks the bone, can heal it! He that takes away our joy, when we are under a sense of sin, can give us back that joy by a realization of pardon!

9. Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

“And when You have done that, change my nature, that I may not sin again.”

10, 11. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Your presence; and take not Your Holy Spirit from me.

He might well be afraid that, after so foul a fall, so disgraceful a crime, God would cast him away, but he prays that it may not be so: “Cast me not away from Your presence.”

12, 13. Restore unto me the joy of Your salvation; and uphold me with Your free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors Your ways; and sinners shall be converted unto You.

“I will tell others what You have done. Your free grace, Your pardoning mercy shall not be hidden away in my breast, but I will begin to be a preacher of Your love. Yes, and I shall have converts, too, for the news of Your grace to me shall draw others to you—‘sinners shall be converted unto You.’”

14. Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness.

He puts his finger on the sin. He might have said, and at one time he did say, that he did not kill Uriah the Hittite. Ah, but when he is right with God, he makes no pretences! He does not mince the matter, but he confesses the blood-guiltiness, for he was guilty of Uriah’s death: “Deliver me from blood-guiltiness.” Be honest with God. You will not receive pardon till you are. He can see through you—what is the use of attempting to hide anything from Him? Out with it, man, that God may out with it, too! Confess it, that God’s pardon covering your confession may cover all your sin.

15-17. O Lord, open You my lips; and my mouth shall show forth Your praise. For You desire not sacrifice; else would I give it: You delight not in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.

Are you bringing this sacrifice to the Lord? Are there some in this house of prayer who have greatly sinned and who are now greatly ashamed of themselves? Take heart of hope, poor sinner, for God delights to accept a broken and contrite heart!

18, 19. Do good in Your good pleasure unto Zion: build You the walls of Jerusalem. Then shall You be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon Your altar.

Now turn to the prophecy of Zechariah, chapter 12, verse ten.

Zechariah 12:10-14. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadad Rimmon in the valley of Megiddo. And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their

wives apart; the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; all the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart.

Zechariah 13:1, 2. *In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness. And it shall come to pass in that day.*

How much God can crowd into a single day!

2. *Says the LORD of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land.*

God will not only destroy the idols, but He will cut off the very names of them out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered.

3. *And it shall come to pass that when any shall yet prophesy, then his father and his mother that begat him shall say unto him, You shall not live; for you speak lies in the name of the LORD: and his father and his mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesies.*

It was a part of the law of God in the Book of Deuteronomy that any man who professed to be a prophet and who sought to turn the people aside to the worship of idols, should be put to death. And it is here declared that when God had cleansed the land, there would be no false prophets! And if any man pretended to be a prophet of the Lord when he was not sent of God, his own father and mother would be the first to execute judgment upon him!

4. *And it shall come to pass in that day, that the prophets shall be ashamed, every one, of his vision, when he has prophesied; neither shall they wear a rough garment to deceive.*

Imitating Elijah's garb, the false prophets hoped to win the attention of the people by the roughness of their dress. But all this would be dropped, for the people would be so well instructed that they would refuse to hear the false prophet.

5. *But he shall say, I am no prophet, I am an husbandman, for man taught me to keep cattle from my youth.*

They shall be so ashamed of it that, to have kept cattle shall seem to be a far more noble employment than to have falsely set up to be a prophet of the Lord!

6. *And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in your hands? "You wear the marks usually seen in God's servants; you have scarred yourself as His prophets were accustomed to do; you have, as it were, tattooed yourself with the name of your God. What does it all mean?" But he shall be so ashamed of it that—*

6. *Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.*

He shall say *anything* rather than confess that he is a false prophet, he shall be so ashamed of himself! What a mercy it is when God makes men ashamed of sin, and when He makes them so ashamed of false doctrine that they cannot bear it, and will not any longer proclaim it! Oh, that that day were already come!

Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software.

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